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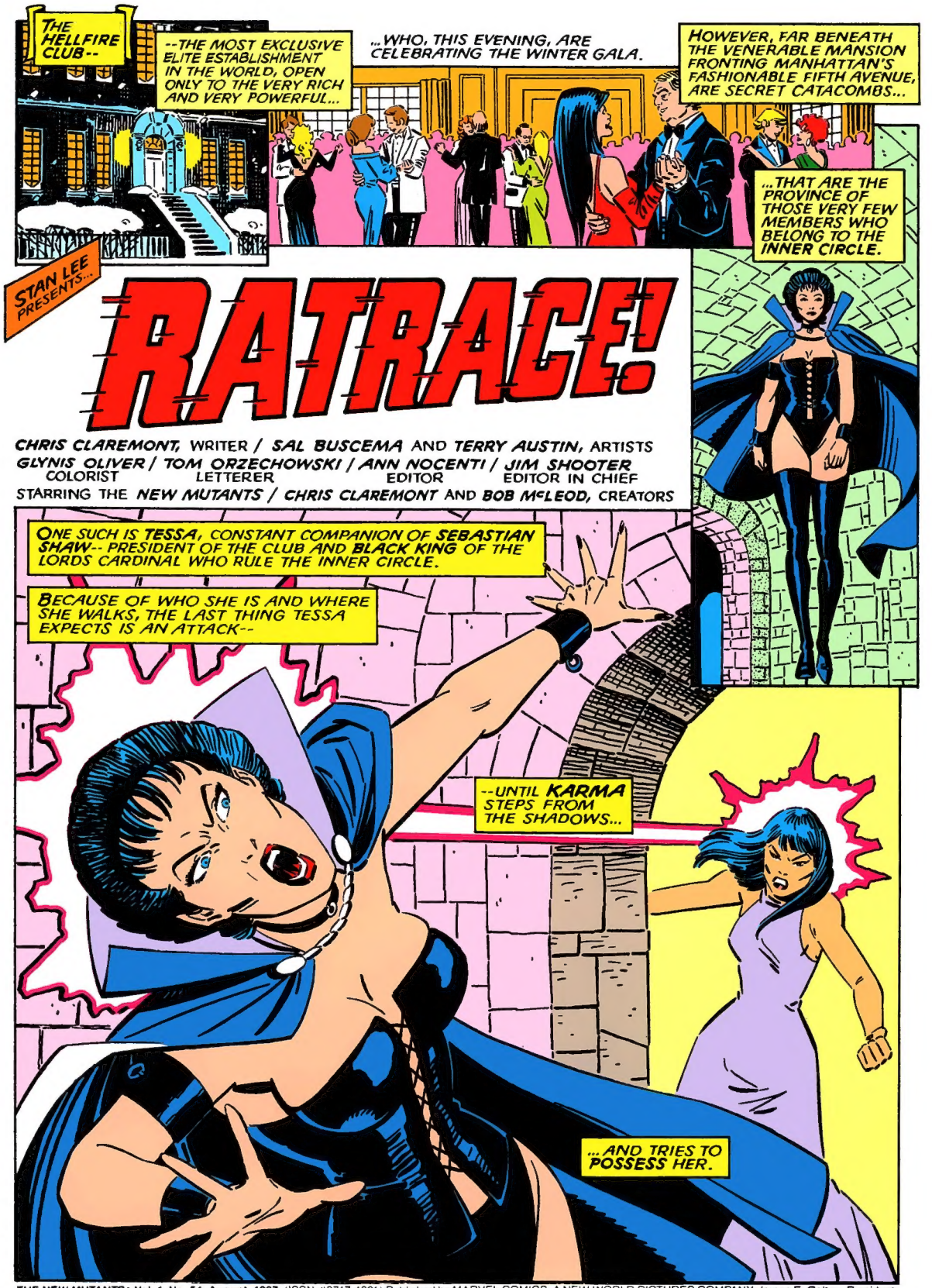
THE HELLFIRE CLUB--
--THE MOST EXCLUSIVE ELITE ESTABLISHMENT IN THE WORLD, OPEN ONLY TO THE VERY RICH AND VERY POWERFUL...
...WHO, THIS EVENING, ARE CELEBRATING THE WINTER GALA.
HOWEVER, FAR BENEATH THE VENERABLE MANSION FRONTING MANHATTAN'S FASHIONABLE FIFTH AVENUE, ARE SECRET CATACOMBS...
...THAT ARE THE PROVINCE OF THOSE VERY FEW MEMBERS WHO BELONG TO THE INNER CIRCLE.
STAN LEE PRESENTS...
RATRACE!
CHRIS CLAREMONT, WRITER / SAL BUSCEMA AND TERRY AUSTIN, ARTISTS
GLYNIS OLIVER / TOM ORZECHOWSKI / ANN NOCENTI / JIM SHOOTER
COLORIST LETTERER EDITOR EDITOR IN CHIEF
STARRING THE NEW MUTANTS / CHRIS CLAREMONT AND BOB McLEOD, CREATORS
ONE SUCH IS TESSA, CONSTANT COMPANION OF SEBASTIAN SHAW-- PRESIDENT OF THE CLUB AND BLACK KING OF THE LORDS CARDINAL WHO RULE THE INNER CIRCLE.
BECAUSE OF WHO SHE IS AND WHERE SHE WALKS, THE LAST THING TESSA EXPECTS IS AN ATTACK--
--UNTIL KARMA STEPS FROM THE SHADOWS...
...AND TRIES TO POSSESS HER.

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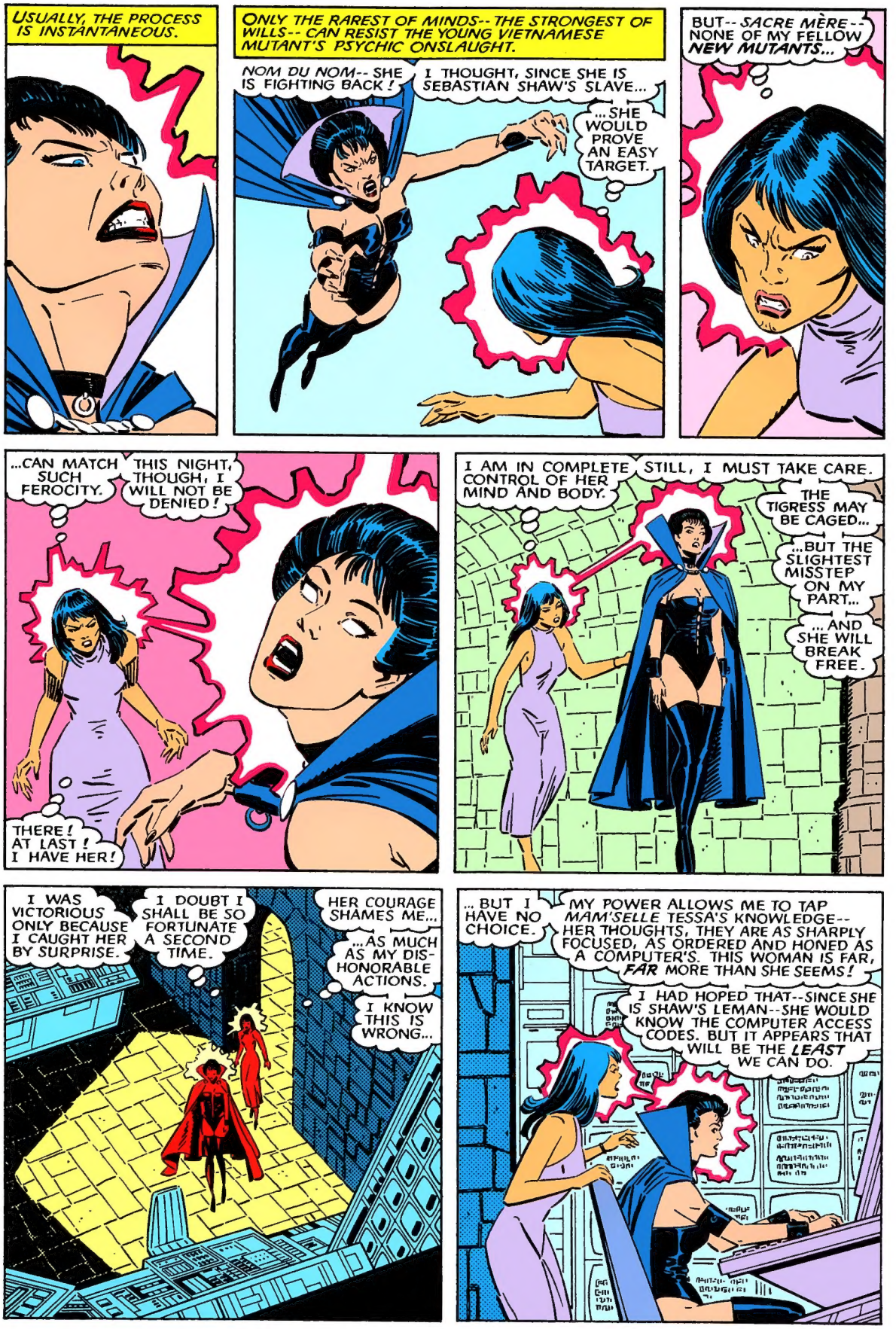
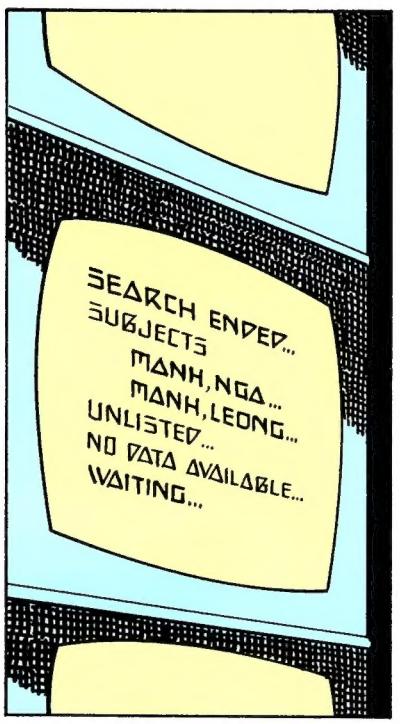

USUALLY, THE PROCESS IS INSTANTANEOUS.
ONLY THE RAREST OF MINDS-- THE STRONGEST OF WILLS-- CAN RESIST THE YOUNG VIETNAMESE MUTANT'S PSYCHIC ONSLAUGHT.
NOM DU NOM-- SHE IS FIGHTING BACK!
I THOUGHT, SINCE SHE IS SEBASTIAN SHAW'S SLAVE...
...SHE WOULD PROVE AN EASY TARGET.
BUT-- SACRE MÈRE-- NONE OF MY FELLOW NEW MUTANTS...
...CAN MATCH SUCH FEROCITY.
THIS NIGHT, THOUGH, I WILL NOT BE DENIED!
THERE! AT LAST! I HAVE HER!
I AM IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF HER MIND AND BODY.
STILL, I MUST TAKE CARE.
THE TIGRESS MAY BE CAGED...
...BUT THE SLIGHTEST MISSTEP ON MY PART...
...AND SHE WILL BREAK FREE.
I WAS VICTORIOUS ONLY BECAUSE I CAUGHT HER BY SURPRISE.
I DOUBT I SHALL BE SO FORTUNATE A SECOND TIME.
HER COURAGE SHAMES ME...
...AS MUCH AS MY DISHONORABLE ACTIONS.
I KNOW THIS IS WRONG...
... BUT I HAVE NO CHOICE.
MY POWER ALLOWS ME TO TAP MAM'SELLE TESSA'S KNOWLEDGE-- HER THOUGHTS, THEY ARE AS SHARPLY FOCUSED, AS ORDERED AND HONED AS A COMPUTER'S. THIS WOMAN IS FAR, FAR MORE THAN SHE SEEMS!
I HAD HOPED THAT--SINCE SHE IS SHAW'S LEMAN--SHE WOULD KNOW THE COMPUTER ACCESS CODES. BUT IT APPEARS THAT WILL BE THE LEAST WE CAN DO.

THROUGH TESSA, I CAN ACCESS ALL PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT DATA NETWORKS WITH AN UN-LIMITED SEARCH PROGRAM.
SPLENDIDE -- THAT SHOULD BE PRECISELY WHAT I NEED.
SOMEPLACE IN THIS ELECTRONIC LABYRINTH THERE HAS TO BE AT LEAST A CLUE TO THE WHEREABOUTS OF MY BROTHER AND SISTER!
MY TEACHER, MAGNETO, SAID HE DID EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO FIND THEM. I DO NOT DOUBT HIS WORD.
BUT I HAVE TO SEE FOR MYSELF, I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING! PERHAPS HE DID NOT LOOK HARD ENOUGH-- OR MISSED SOMETHING--THERE HAS TO BE AN ANSWER!

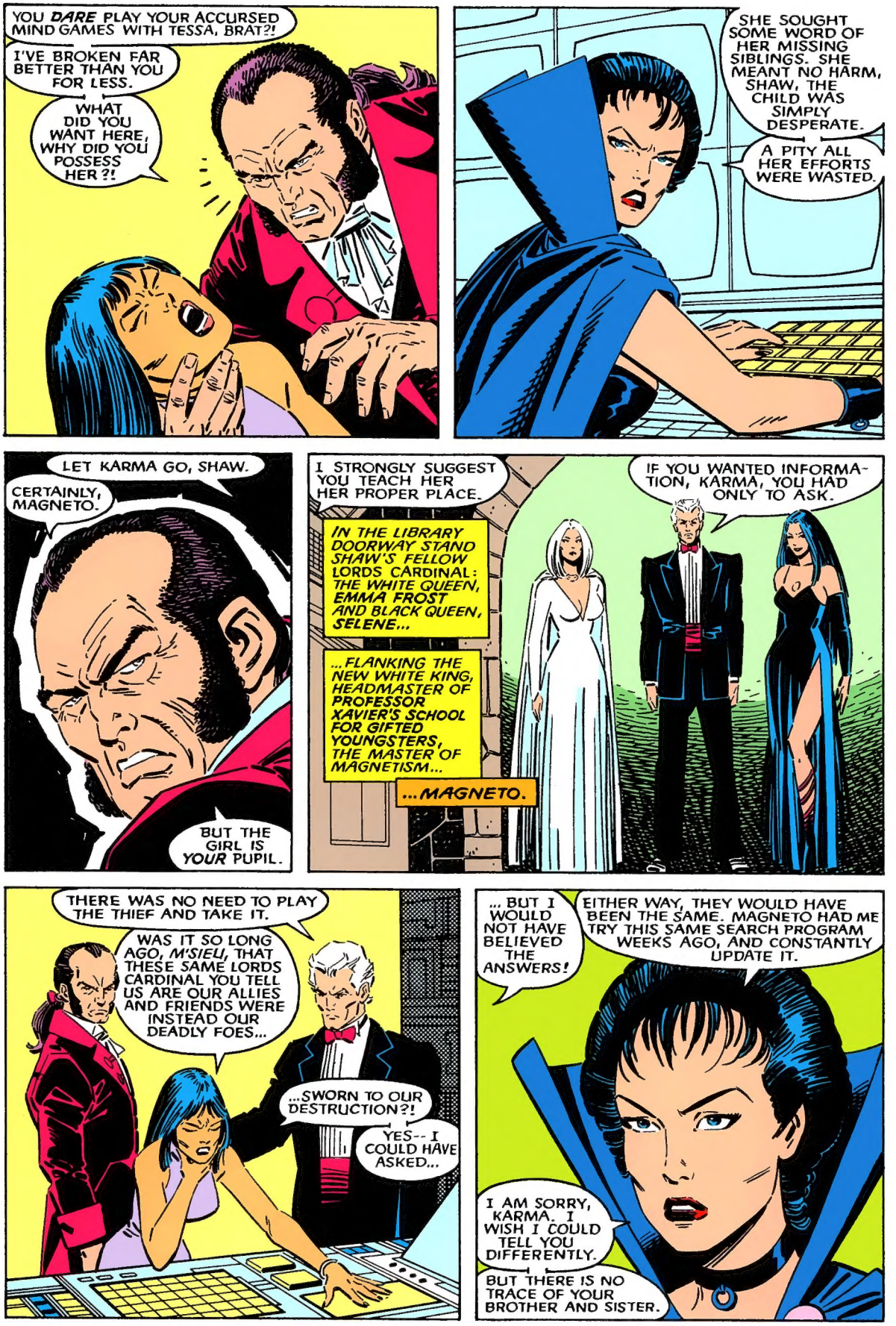

SEARCH ENDED...
SUBJECTS
MANH, NGA...
MANH, LEONG...
UNLISTED...
NO DATA AVAILABLE...
WAITING...

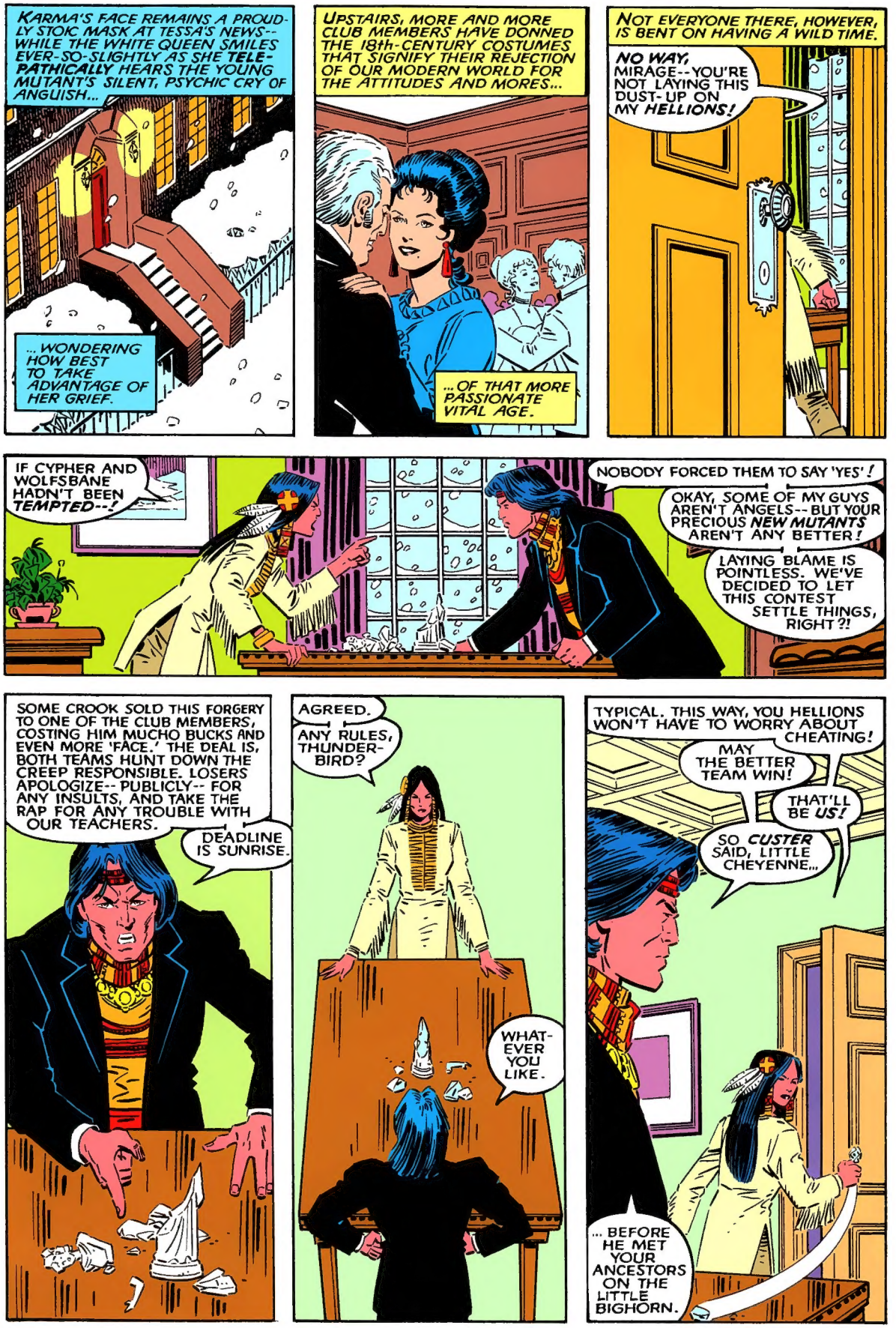
NO NO NO!
CAN THEY BE SO WELL HIDDEN?!

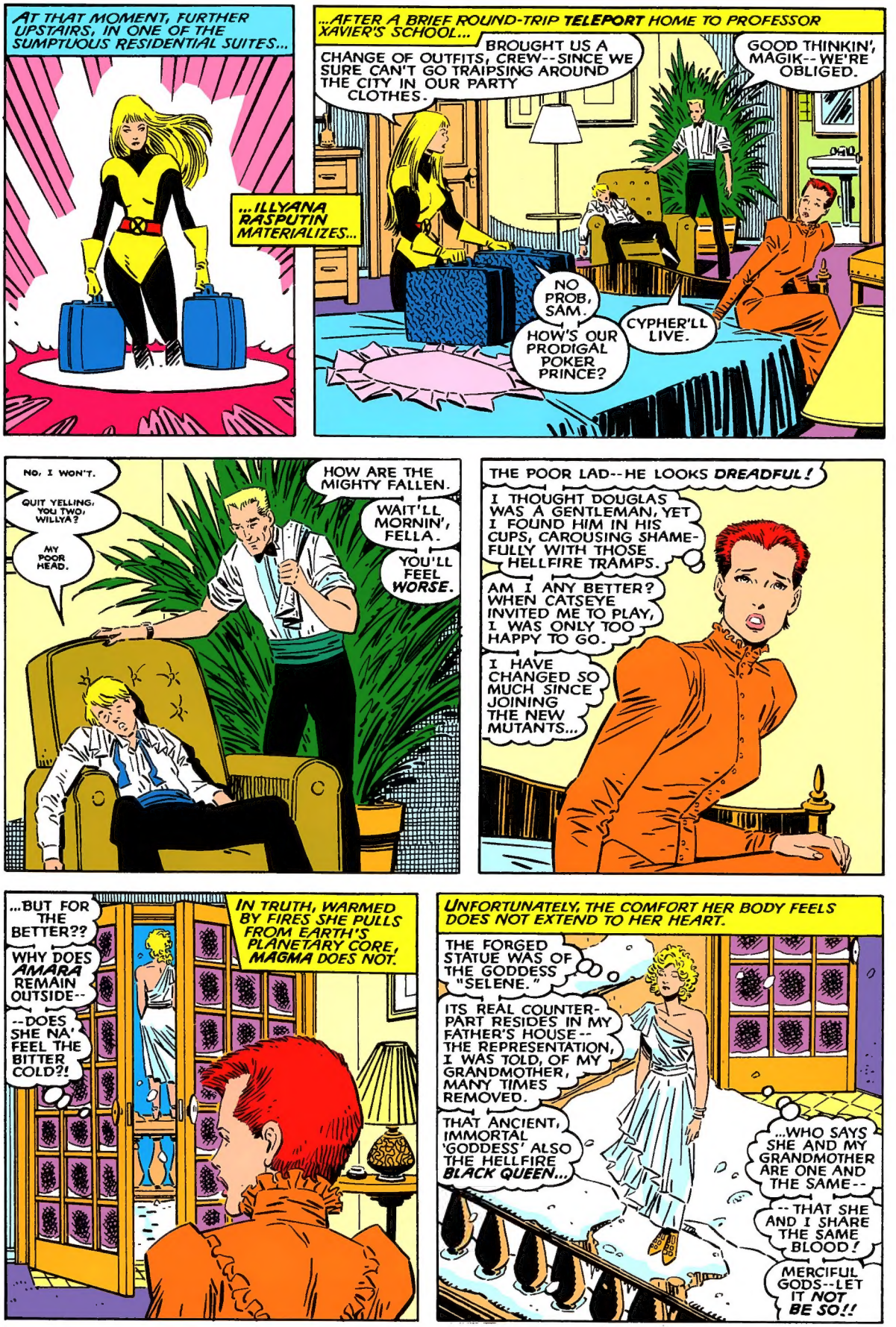
WE MUST KEEP LOOKING.
BEGIN AGAIN-- AND THIS TIME...
...TRY HARDER!

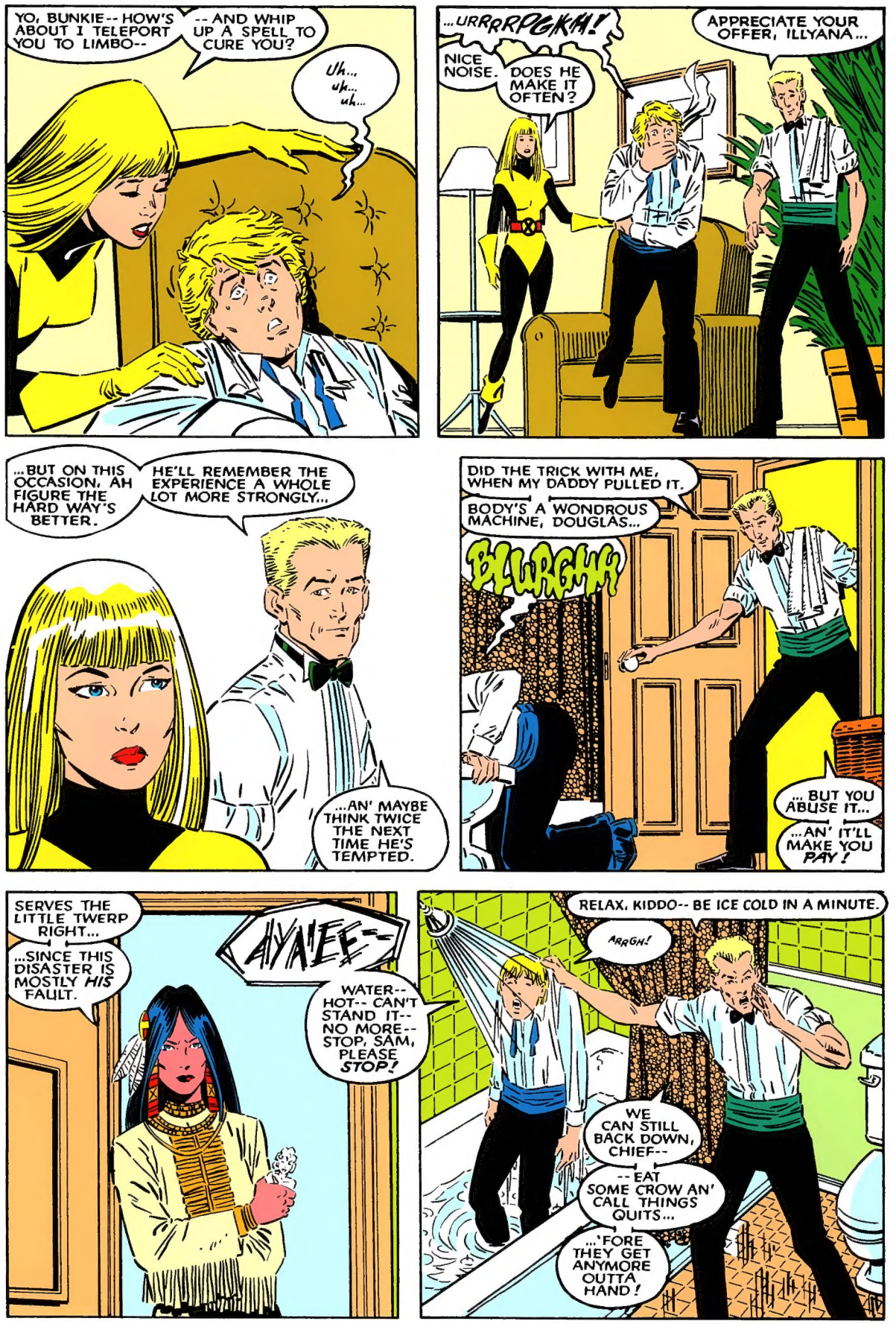
THAT, YOUNG LADY...
... WILL BE QUITE ENOUGH OF THAT!
WH--
OHWW!
SLAM!

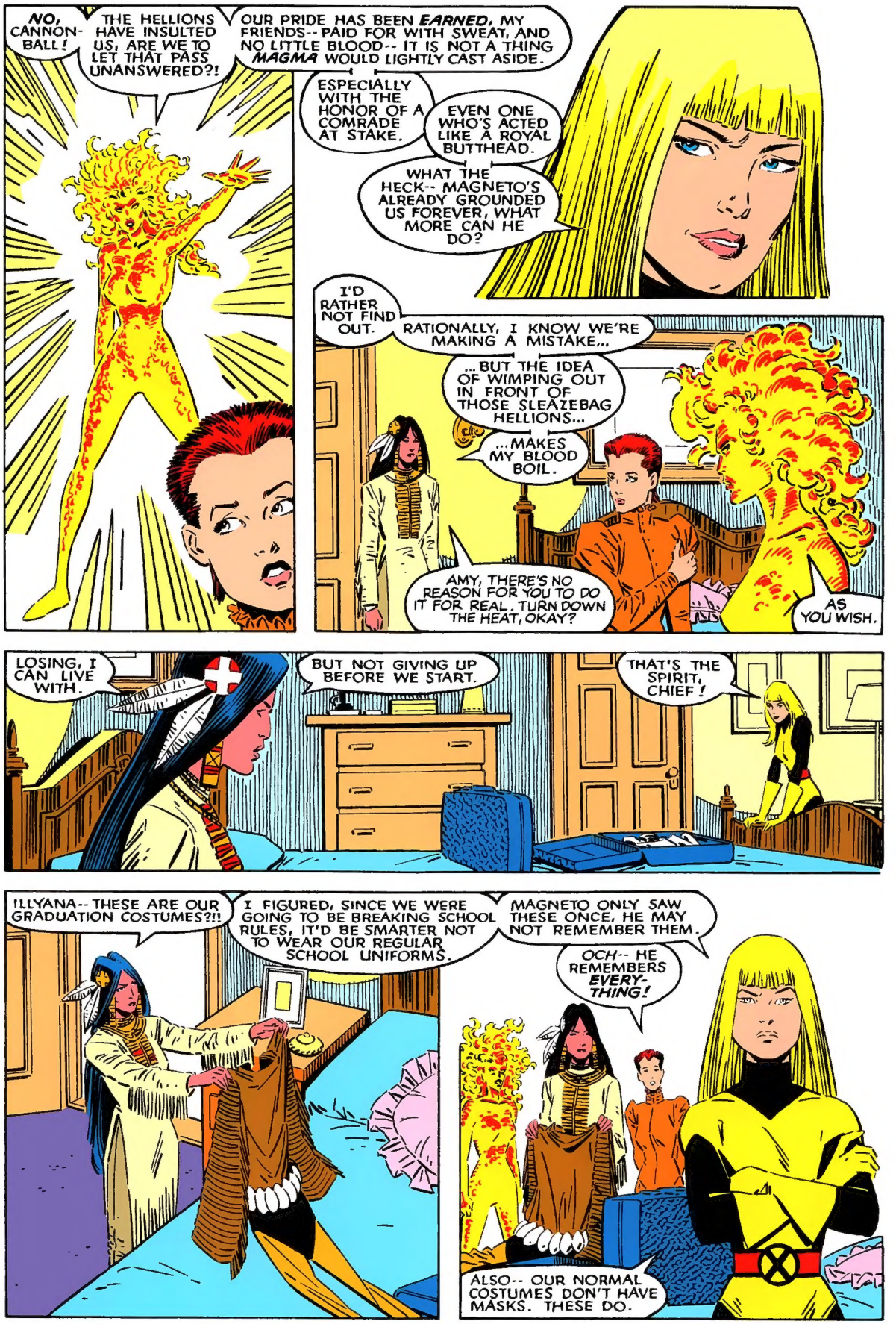
DON'T EVEN THINK OF USING YOUR POWER ON ME, GIRL.
OR THAT THOUGHT WILL BE YOUR LAST!
SHAW, DON'T!
I AM UNHURT!


YOU DARE PLAY YOUR ACCURSED MIND GAMES WITH TESSA, BRAT?!
I'VE BROKEN FAR BETTER THAN YOU FOR LESS.
WHAT DID YOU WANT HERE, WHY DID YOU POSSESS HER?!
SHE SOUGHT SOME WORD OF HER MISSING SIBLINGS. SHE MEANT NO HARM, SHAW, THE CHILD WAS SIMPLY DESPERATE.
A PITY ALL HER EFFORTS WERE WASTED.
LET KARMA GO, SHAW.
CERTAINLY, MAGNETO.
BUT THE GIRL IS YOUR PUPIL.
I STRONGLY SUGGEST YOU TEACH HER HER PROPER PLACE.
IN THE LIBRARY DOORWAY STAND SHAW'S FELLOW LORDS CARDINAL: THE WHITE QUEEN, EMMA FROST AND BLACK QUEEN, SELENE...
...FLANKING THE NEW WHITE KING, HEADMASTER OF PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS, THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM...
...MAGNETO.
IF YOU WANTED INFORMATION, KARMA, YOU HAD ONLY TO ASK.
THERE WAS NO NEED TO PLAY THE THIEF AND TAKE IT.
WAS IT SO LONG AGO, M'SIEU, THAT THESE SAME LORDS CARDINAL YOU TELL US ARE OUR ALLIES AND FRIENDS WERE INSTEAD OUR DEADLY FOES...
...SWORN TO OUR DESTRUCTION?!
YES-- I COULD HAVE ASKED...
... BUT I WOULD NOT HAVE BELIEVED THE ANSWERS!
EITHER WAY, THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN THE SAME. MAGNETO HAD ME TRY THIS SAME SEARCH PROGRAM WEEKS AGO, AND CONSTANTLY UPDATE IT.
I AM SORRY, KARMA. I WISH I COULD TELL YOU DIFFERENTLY.
BUT THERE IS NO TRACE OF YOUR BROTHER AND SISTER.


KARMA'S FACE REMAINS A PROUDLY STOIC MASK AT TESSA'S NEWS--WHILE THE WHITE QUEEN SMILES EVER-SO-SLIGHTLY AS SHE TELEPATHICALLY HEARS THE YOUNG MUTANT'S SILENT, PSYCHIC CRY OF ANGUISH...
...WONDERING HOW BEST TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HER GRIEF.
UPSTAIRS, MORE AND MORE CLUB MEMBERS HAVE DONNED THE 18th-CENTURY COSTUMES THAT SIGNIFY THEIR REJECTION OF OUR MODERN WORLD FOR THE ATTITUDES AND MORES...
...OF THAT MORE PASSIONATE VITAL AGE.
NOT EVERYONE THERE, HOWEVER, IS BENT ON HAVING A WILD TIME.
NO WAY, MIRAGE--YOU'RE NOT LAYING THIS DUST-UP ON MY HELLIONS!
IF CYPHER AND WOLFSBANE HADN'T BEEN TEMPTED--!
NOBODY FORCED THEM TO SAY 'YES'!
OKAY, SOME OF MY GUYS AREN'T ANGELS--BUT YOUR PRECIOUS NEW MUTANTS AREN'T ANY BETTER!
LAYING BLAME IS POINTLESS. WE'VE DECIDED TO LET THIS CONTEST SETTLE THINGS, RIGHT?!
SOME CROOK SOLD THIS FORGERY TO ONE OF THE CLUB MEMBERS, COSTING HIM MUCHO BUCKS AND EVEN MORE 'FACE.' THE DEAL IS, BOTH TEAMS HUNT DOWN THE CREEP RESPONSIBLE. LOSERS APOLOGIZE--PUBLICLY--FOR ANY INSULTS, AND TAKE THE RAP FOR ANY TROUBLE WITH OUR TEACHERS.
DEADLINE IS SUNRISE.
AGREED.
ANY RULES, THUNDERBIRD?
WHATEVER YOU LIKE.
TYPICAL. THIS WAY, YOU HELLIONS WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT CHEATING!
MAY THE BETTER TEAM WIN!
THAT'LL BE US!
SO CUSTER SAID, LITTLE CHEYENNE...
...BEFORE HE MET YOUR ANCESTORS ON THE LITTLE BIGHORN.


AT THAT MOMENT, FURTHER UPSTAIRS, IN ONE OF THE SUMPTUOUS RESIDENTIAL SUITES...
...ILLYANA RASPUTIN MATERIALIZES...
...AFTER A BRIEF ROUND-TRIP TELEPORT HOME TO PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL...
BROUGHT US A CHANGE OF OUTFITS, CREW--SINCE WE SURE CAN'T GO TRAIPSING AROUND THE CITY IN OUR PARTY CLOTHES.
GOOD THINKIN', MAGIK--WE'RE OBLIGED.
NO PROB, SAM.
HOW'S OUR PRODIGAL POKER PRINCE?
CYPHER'LL LIVE.
NO, I WON'T.
QUIT YELLING, YOU TWO, WILLYA?
MY POOR HEAD.
HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN.
WAIT'LL MORNIN', FELLA.
YOU'LL FEEL WORSE.
THE POOR LAD--HE LOOKS DREADFUL!
I THOUGHT DOUGLAS WAS A GENTLEMAN, YET I FOUND HIM IN HIS CUPS, CAROUSING SHAMEFULLY WITH THOSE HELLFIRE TRAMPS.
AM I ANY BETTER? WHEN CATSEYE INVITED ME TO PLAY, I WAS ONLY TOO HAPPY TO GO.
I HAVE CHANGED SO MUCH SINCE JOINING THE NEW MUTANTS...
...BUT FOR THE BETTER??
WHY DOES AMARA REMAIN OUTSIDE--
--DOES SHE NA' FEEL THE BITTER COLD?!
IN TRUTH, WARMED BY FIRES SHE PULLS FROM EARTH'S PLANETARY CORE, MAGMA DOES NOT.
UNFORTUNATELY, THE COMFORT HER BODY FEELS DOES NOT EXTEND TO HER HEART.
THE FORGED STATUE WAS OF THE GODDESS "SELENE."
ITS REAL COUNTERPART RESIDES IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE--THE REPRESENTATION, I WAS TOLD, OF MY GRANDMOTHER, MANY TIMES REMOVED.
THAT ANCIENT, IMMORTAL 'GODDESS' ALSO THE HELLFIRE BLACK QUEEN...
...WHO SAYS SHE AND MY GRANDMOTHER ARE ONE AND THE SAME--
--THAT SHE AND I SHARE THE SAME BLOOD!
MERCIFUL GODS--LET IT NOT BE SO!!

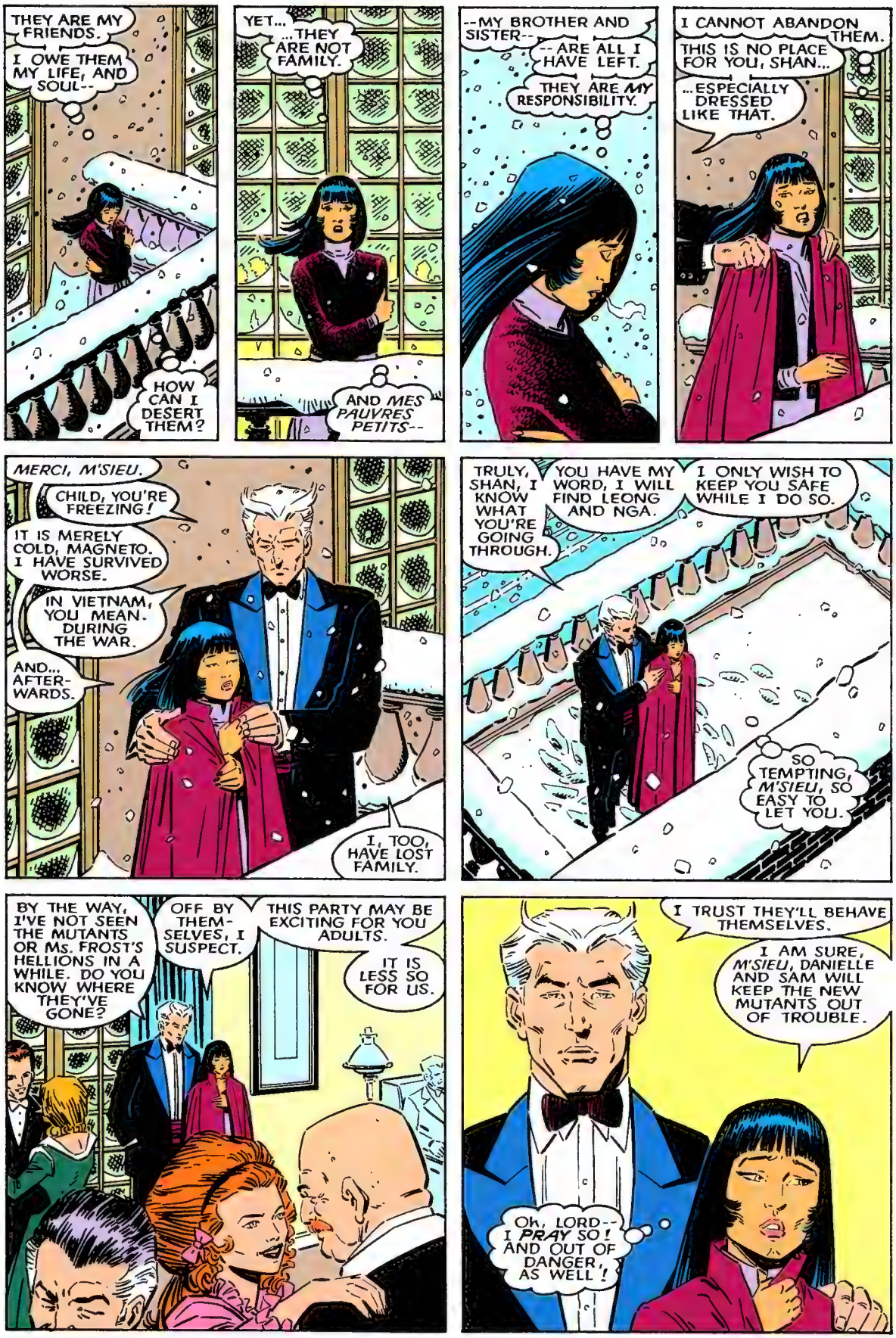

YO, BUNKIE-- HOW'S ABOUT I TELEPORT YOU TO LIMBO--
-- AND WHIP UP A SPELL TO CURE YOU?
Uh... uh... uh...
...URRRRPGKH!
NICE NOISE.
DOES HE MAKE IT OFTEN?
APPRECIATE YOUR OFFER, ILLYANA...
...BUT ON THIS OCCASION, AH FIGURE THE HARD WAY'S BETTER.
HE'LL REMEMBER THE EXPERIENCE A WHOLE LOT MORE STRONGLY...
...AN' MAYBE THINK TWICE THE NEXT TIME HE'S TEMPTED.
DID THE TRICK WITH ME, WHEN MY DADDY PULLED IT.
BODY'S A WONDROUS MACHINE, DOUGLAS...
BLURGHH
... BUT YOU ABUSE IT...
...AN' IT'LL MAKE YOU PAY!
SERVES THE LITTLE TWERP RIGHT...
...SINCE THIS DISASTER IS MOSTLY HIS FAULT.
AYAIEE--
WATER-- HOT-- CAN'T STAND IT-- NO MORE-- STOP, SAM, PLEASE STOP!
RELAX, KIDDO-- BE ICE COLD IN A MINUTE.
ARRGH!
WE CAN STILL BACK DOWN, CHIEF--
-- EAT SOME CROW AN' CALL THINGS QUITS...
...'FORE THEY GET ANYMORE OUTTA HAND!

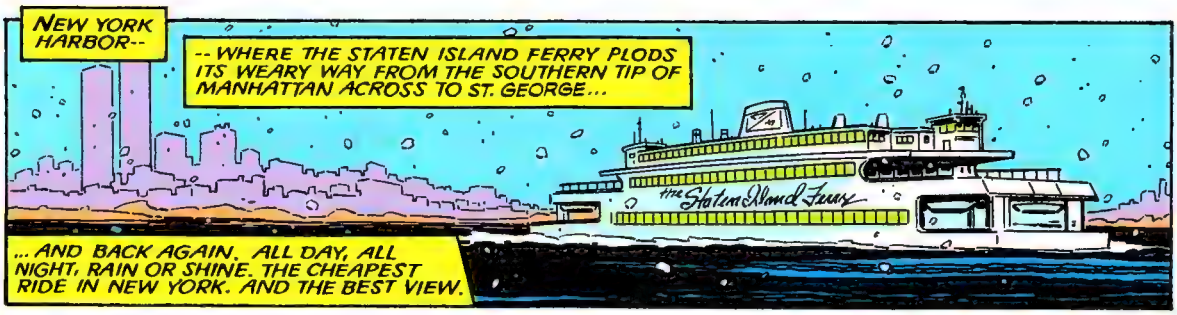

NO, CANNONBALL!
THE HELLIONS HAVE INSULTED US, ARE WE TO LET THAT PASS UNANSWERED?!
OUR PRIDE HAS BEEN EARNED, MY FRIENDS-- PAID FOR WITH SWEAT, AND NO LITTLE BLOOD-- IT IS NOT A THING MAGMA WOULD LIGHTLY CAST ASIDE.
ESPECIALLY WITH THE HONOR OF A COMRADE AT STAKE.
EVEN ONE WHO'S ACTED LIKE A ROYAL BUTTHEAD.
WHAT THE HECK-- MAGNETO'S ALREADY GROUNDED US FOREVER, WHAT MORE CAN HE DO?
I'D RATHER NOT FIND OUT.
RATIONALLY, I KNOW WE'RE MAKING A MISTAKE...
...BUT THE IDEA OF WIMPING OUT IN FRONT OF THOSE SLEAZEBAG HELLIONS...
...MAKES MY BLOOD BOIL.
AMY, THERE'S NO REASON FOR YOU TO DO IT FOR REAL. TURN DOWN THE HEAT, OKAY?
AS YOU WISH.
LOSING, I CAN LIVE WITH.
BUT NOT GIVING UP BEFORE WE START.
THAT'S THE SPIRIT, CHIEF!
ILLYANA-- THESE ARE OUR GRADUATION COSTUMES?!!
I FIGURED, SINCE WE WERE GOING TO BE BREAKING SCHOOL RULES, IT'D BE SMARTER NOT TO WEAR OUR REGULAR SCHOOL UNIFORMS.
MAGNETO ONLY SAW THESE ONCE, HE MAY NOT REMEMBER THEM.
OCH-- HE REMEMBERS EVERY-THING!
ALSO-- OUR NORMAL COSTUMES DON'T HAVE MASKS. THESE DO.

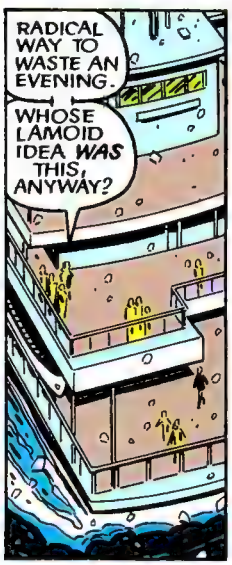
BETTER TO HIDE OUR FACES AND IDENTITIES IN PUBLIC, DON'T'CHA THINK?
TERRIFFIC. THESE WERE MEANT TO SIGNIFY OUR MATURITY-- AS INDIVIDUALS AND A TEAM.
INSTEAD, WE'LL USE 'EM TO PROVE THE REVERSE--
--HOW CHILDISHLY IRRESPONSIBLE WE CAN BE.
HERE'S YOURS, SAM. AND DOUG'S.
WE'LL SWITCH IN THE BATHROOM, DANI.
FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I'M CO-LEADER OF THE MUTANTS, SAME AS YOU. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS IS MINE, TOO. WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER, CHIEF-- ALL THE WAY.
I'M GRATEFUL, SAM.
LET'S HOPE...
...THIS WON'T COME...
...TO ANY-THING BAD.
HERE, WOLFSBANE.
IT'S A CHUNK OF THE STATUETTE.
SHIFT TO WOLFEN AND GIVE IT A LOOK-SEE.
AYE, MIRAGE-- I SHALL.
AND, WITH THAT, THE YOUNGEST NEW MUTANT RESHAPES HER FLESH...
...INTO ITS HALF-HUMAN, HALF-WOLF TRANSI-TIONAL FORM, BLENDING THE BEST ATTRIBUTES OF BOTH SPECIES.
THERE IS A STRIKING RESEMBLANCE TO AMARA.
COULD IT BE TRUE, WHAT THE BLACK QUEEN SAID, THAT SHE AN' AMARA ARE RELATED?!
POOR LASS-- POOR AMY-- THAT'D BE AWFUL!
IN THIS INCARNATION, RAHNE'S SENSES BECOME FANTASTICALLY KEEN--
--SIGHT SO SENSITIVE SHE CAN PERCEIVE PATTERNS OF HEAT, SMELL SO SHARP SHE CAN FOLLOW THE FAINTEST OF TRAILS, EVEN THROUGH THE HEART OF THE CITY.

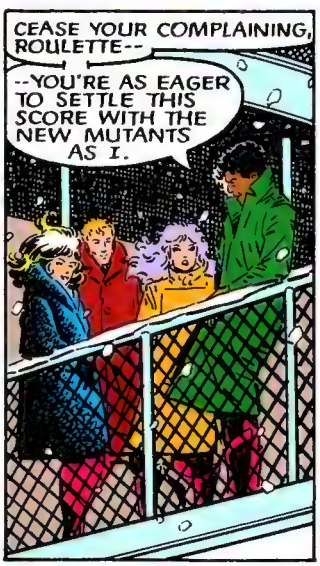
MES AMIS--
-- I WAS TOLD YOU WISHED TO--
--QUOI?!?
WHAT IS THIS?!!?
A CAPER, KARMA.
US AGAINST THE HELLIONS.
HERE'S YOUR COSTUME, SHAN.
WE'LL BOOGIE, SOON AS YOU'RE DRESSED.
NON, ILLYANA.
I AM NOT GOING.
THIS IS A TEAM EFFORT--YOU'RE PART OF THE TEAM-- YOU CAN'T PUNK OUT ON US!
I HAVE OTHER-- MORE IMPORTANT-- PRIORITIES.
I WILL NOT BETRAY YOU TO MAGNETO...
...BUT I CANNOT ACCOMPANY YOU. MY HEART WOULD NOT BE IN IT.
I CONFESS, MY HEART HAS NOT BEEN WITH THE TEAM...
... SINCE MY BROTHER AND SISTER WERE KIDNAPED.
I UNDER-STAND, SHAN. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
BUT WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO?
I... AM NOT YET SURE.
WHATEVER YOU DECIDE-- OUR HEARTS ARE WITH YOU. ALWAYS!

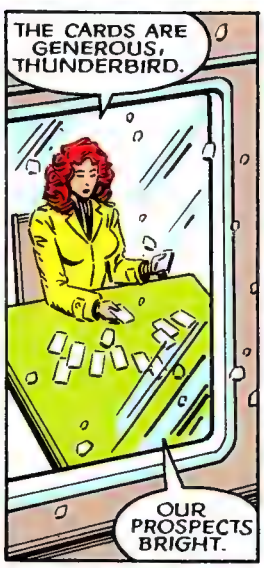
ACROSS FIFTH AVENUE, IN CENTRAL PARK, AFTER SNEAKING OUT OF THE CLUB...
Y'KNOW, THIS CLEARING IS WHERE WE ARRIVED...
... A FEW HOURS AGO...
...WHEN I TELEPORTED US TO THE PARTY.
I WILL GLOW NOW AS I DID THEN, MY FRIENDS...
...TO KEEP US WARM.
THANKS, MAGMA.
WHEN THIS CAPER'S DONE...
...SOMEONE REMIND ME TO ADD SOME PANTS TO MY OUTFIT.
MY LEGS ARE FREEZING!
FOUND ANYTHING...
...RAHEYYY!?!
NO NO NO NO NO
WHAT THE HECK--?!
YOU OKAY, FURTOP?! YOU SOUNDED TERRIFIED!
I WUH-- I WAS--
--WITH GOOD REASON!
THE HELLFIRE GENTLEMAN RECEIVED HIS STATUE HERE...
...AN' I RECOGNIZE THE SCENTS OF THOSE WHO GAVE IT TO HIM!
DANI-- IT WAS THE SILVER SAMURAI...
...AND VIPER!


THEY ARE MY FRIENDS.
I OWE THEM MY LIFE, AND SOUL--
HOW CAN I DESERT THEM?
YET...
...THEY ARE NOT FAMILY.
AND MES PAUVRES PETITS--
--MY BROTHER AND SISTER--
-- ARE ALL I HAVE LEFT.
THEY ARE MY RESPONSIBILITY.
I CANNOT ABANDON THEM.
THIS IS NO PLACE FOR YOU, SHAN...
...ESPECIALLY DRESSED LIKE THAT.
MERCI, M'SIEU.
CHILD, YOU'RE FREEZING!
IT IS MERELY COLD, MAGNETO. I HAVE SURVIVED WORSE.
IN VIETNAM, YOU MEAN. DURING THE WAR.
AND... AFTER-WARDS.
I, TOO, HAVE LOST FAMILY.
TRULY, SHAN, I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH.
YOU HAVE MY WORD, I WILL FIND LEONG AND NGA.
I ONLY WISH TO KEEP YOU SAFE WHILE I DO SO.
SO TEMPTING, M'SIEU, SO EASY TO LET YOU.
BY THE WAY, I'VE NOT SEEN THE MUTANTS OR MS. FROST'S HELLIONS IN A WHILE. DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY'VE GONE?
OFF BY THEM-SELVES, I SUSPECT.
THIS PARTY MAY BE EXCITING FOR YOU ADULTS.
IT IS LESS SO FOR US.
I TRUST THEY'LL BEHAVE THEMSELVES.
I AM SURE, M'SIEU, DANIELLE AND SAM WILL KEEP THE NEW MUTANTS OUT OF TROUBLE.
Oh, LORD-- I PRAY SO! AND OUT OF DANGER, AS WELL!

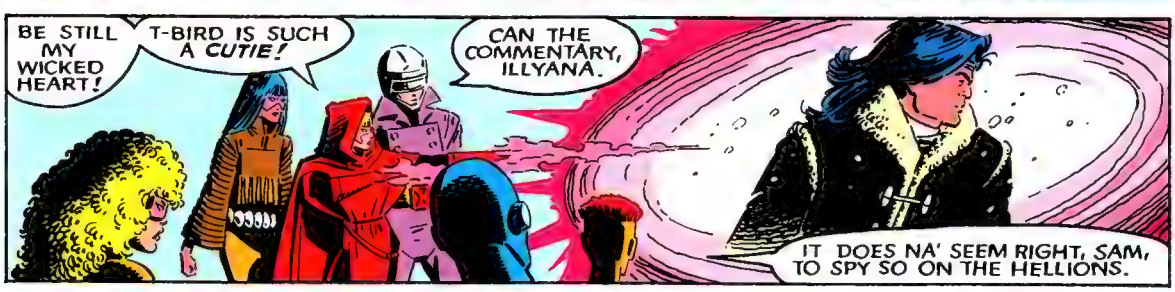

NEW YORK HARBOR--
-- WHERE THE STATEN ISLAND FERRY PLODS ITS WEARY WAY FROM THE SOUTHERN TIP OF MANHATTAN ACROSS TO ST. GEORGE...
the Staten Island Ferry
... AND BACK AGAIN, ALL DAY, ALL NIGHT, RAIN OR SHINE. THE CHEAPEST RIDE IN NEW YORK. AND THE BEST VIEW.


RADICAL WAY TO WASTE AN EVENING.
WHOSE LAMOID IDEA WAS THIS, ANYWAY?

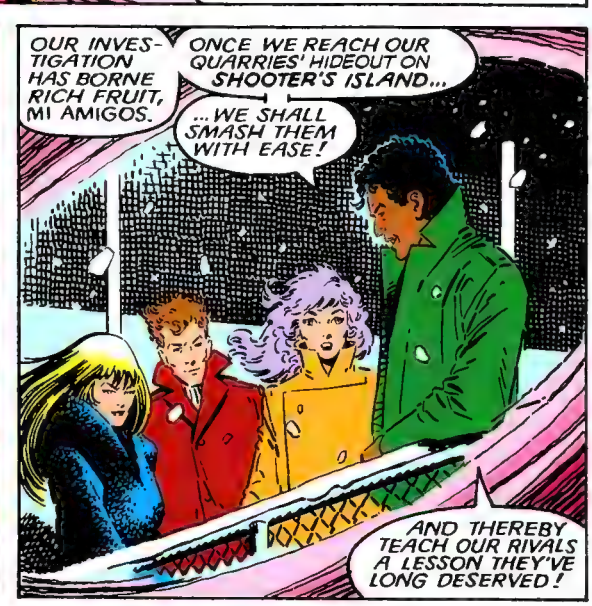

CEASE YOUR COMPLAINING, ROULETTE--
--YOU'RE AS EAGER TO SETTLE THIS SCORE WITH THE NEW MUTANTS AS I.


THE CARDS ARE GENEROUS, THUNDERBIRD.
OUR PROSPECTS BRIGHT.

YOU SHOULDN'T LET THOSE CARDS RUN YOUR LIFE, TAROT.
YOU HAVE TO TRUST MORE IN YOUR-SELF.


BE STILL MY WICKED HEART!
T-BIRD IS SUCH A CUTIE!
CAN THE COMMENTARY, ILLYANA.
IT DOES NA' SEEM RIGHT, SAM, TO SPY SO ON THE HELLIONS.

IT'S FOR THEIR OWN GOOD, RAHNE. WE WOULDN'T DO IT, OTHER-WISE.
HERE IN LIMBO, MY SORCEROUS POWERS ARE ACTIVE. I CAN CREATE A SCRYING POOL, TO KEEP TABS ON THOSE CREEPS...
...AND THEN USE MY MUTANT POWER TO TELEPORT US ANYWHERE IN TIME AND SPACE WE NEED TO GO.


OUR INVES-TIGATION HAS BORNE RICH FRUIT, MI AMIGOS.
ONCE WE REACH OUR QUARRIES' HIDEOUT ON SHOOTER'S ISLAND...
...WE SHALL SMASH THEM WITH EASE!
AND THEREBY TEACH OUR RIVALS A LESSON THEY'VE LONG DESERVED!

ILLYANA, CAN YOU FIND THAT ISLAND AND GET US THERE BEFORE THE HELLIONS?
CHILD'S-PLAY.
WE'LL SCOUT THE PLACE FROM LIMBO FIRST, DETERMINE WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST BEFORE MOVING IN.
WHY BOTHER?

WHAT D'YOU MEAN, DOUG-BOY?
THE HELLIONS ARE ON THEIR WAY, WHY RISK OUR BUTTS TO SAVE THEIRS? THEY SURE WOULDN'T DO THE SAME FOR US!
THEY FIGURE THEY'RE SO HOT, LET THEM FIGHT THEIR OWN BATTLES.

AND IF ANY ARE HURT--OR WORSE --BECAUSE OF OUR INACTION?
YOU WANT THAT ON YOUR CONSCIENCE?
I CAN LIVE WITH IT.

BETTER THEM THAN US, I FIGURE.
DOUGLAS!
I'VE NE'ER HEARD YOU TALK SO!

WELL MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE I'VE NEVER FELT SO SCARED-- ALL RIGHT, YOU HAPPY, RAHNE, YOU KNOW MY GUILTY LITTLE SECRET--
--I'M SCARED!

WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?
HE'S BEEN ON A TEAR SINCE WARLOCK TOOK OFF AFTER SUNSPOT*--AH KNEW HE WAS UPSET, DIDN'T REALIZE IT WAS SO BAD.
WANT TO LEAVE HIM BEHIND, CHIEF, HERE IN LIMBO?
*INTO THE FALLEN ANGELS LIMITED SERIES, CURRENTLY ON SALE-- AnnN.

"THAT'D ONLY MAKE THINGS WORSE," IS DANI'S QUIETLY SERIOUS REPLY. "HE STAYS WITH THE TEAM, SAM, ALL THE WAY. RAHNE AND I'LL KEEP AN ESPECIAL EYE ON HIM."
AND SO, ON SHOOTER'S ISLAND-- A PRIVATELY-OWNED PATCH OF LAND IN THE KILL VAN KULL, HARD BY STATEN ISLAND...

BORING NIGHT.
THEY'VE ALL BEEN, LATELY.
WISH SOME-THING'D HAPPEN...
...JUST TO BREAK THE...
... MONOTONY.
HIPPITY
HOPPITY
HOOP!
SHE'S TRANSFIXED. AND WILLYA LOOK AT HER GRIN--!
WHAT'S DANI'S POWER MAKING HER SEE--?!
THE IMAGE-- REAL TO HER AS LIFE--OF HER HEART'S DESIRE.
I COULD HAVE MANIFESTED HER GREATEST TERROR, BUT THEN SHE'D HAVE PROBABLY CRIED OUT.
THIS WAY, SHEER DELIGHT WILL KEEP HER SILENT...
... UNTIL MY NERVE PINCH KNOCKS HER OUT.
NEARBY, AT ANOTHER SENTRY POST...
?
!
HI, SAILOR--
--NEW IN TOWN?
BPOW!

THIS IS THE LAST OF THE GUARDS, GUYS. THE COAST IS CLEAR.
MY POWER COULD HAVE DEALT WITH THESE SWINE FAR MORE EASILY--
-- BY BURYING THIS ENTIRE ISLAND IN MOLTEN LAVA.
WE'RE THE "GOOD GUYS," MAGMA. WE DON'T KILL.
THAT MAKES NO SENSE. SOMETIMES IT IS NECESSARY.
THIS AIN'T ONE OF 'EM. BESIDES, THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S CHOCK-FULL OF OIL AND LIQUID NATURAL GAS AN' CHEMICAL REFINERIES.
YOU GET CARELESS WITH YOUR FIRE, WE COULD TRIGGER A CATASTROPHE.
BULK OF THE BADDIES ARE IN THAT WAREHOUSE.
TIME THEN, AH LET 'EM KNOW WE'RE HERE!
AND OFF CANNONBALL GOES-- RAW FLAME EXPLODING FROM HIS BODY AS ITS MUTANT BIO-THERMIC REACTION PROPELS HIM SKYWARD...
...AND THEN THROUGH THE BUILDING WALL...
...JUST LIKE HIS NAMESAKE.
SO WEIRD-- CRASHIN' THROUGH THINGS--
--KEEP EXPECTIN' TO BUST MYSELF TO PIECES.
BUT MY POWER PROTECTS ME WHEN AH USE IT...
... AH CAN'T BE HURT.
SKBOOM!
WHA--?!
WHO--?!!
INTRUDER!
GUN HIM!
NOT ME, GENTS--
--AN' NOT TONIGHT!
THWAM!

LESSEE YOU OUTRUN *BULLETS*, FLYBOY!
BAM BAM BAM BAM BAM
DON'T HAVE TO.
BUT MY HEART STILL JUMPS...
...EACH TIME THEY BOUNCE OFF.
"AH ALWAYS WONDER IF *THIS* IS THE TIME MY POWER LETS ME DOWN."
WHUZZAT?!
CRIPES-- A DOG!
I'M A *WOLF*, Y'SPALPEEN!
YAHHH!
I-- I SOUND SO *PROUD* OF THAT.
I SO ENJOY HOW FAST AND STRONG I FEEL IN THIS FORM.
SOMETIMES, I WISH I COULD REMAIN IN IT ALWAYS.
WHOMP!
NOW, TO ADD TO THE GUNMENS' CONFUSION...
...I'LL CONFRONT THEM WITH THE *SPIRIT-FORMS* OF THEIR GREATEST TERROR.
FIGURES-- IT'S *VIPER*...
...AND HER PET HENCHMAN, THE *SILVER SAMURAI*.

"HOLD THAT POSE, SWEETIE--
"--WHILE I SEND YOU TO THE HAPPY HUNTING GROUND!"
MIRAGE--
--ABOVE YOU--
--A SNIPER!
OH!
VRAMMP!
MURDERER!
IF OUR COMRADE DIES, I SWEAR YOU SHALL BURN!
WHASH
CYPHER--
--NO!
AMY'S SERIOUS!
CAN'T SAY AH BLAME HER.
BUT HOW DO AH STOP HER?
RELAX YOUR BODY, BUSTER, I WON'T DROP YOU.
MY LAVA BLASTS WILL CREATE A PEN TO HOLD THESE ANIMALS.
THE HEAT OF THIS MOLTEN ROCK...
...SHOULD MAKE THEM KEEP THEIR DISTANCE FROM THE WALLS.
ONE MORE FOR THE CAGE, MAGMA.
YOU SHOULD HAVE LET HIM FALL.
I HOPE, DOG, YOU TRY TO ESCAPE.
I WILL ENJOY STOPPING YOU-- PERMANENTLY.

DOUGLAS--?!?
HE'S NA' MOVING-- BREATH'S SO SHALLOW--
MUST CALM MYSELF-- TRY TO USE MY WOLFEN SENSES TO LEARN HIS CONDITION!
DON'T HURT ME--I'M SORRY-- CALL THE COPS-- I'LL CONFESS-- I'LL PLEAD GUILTY--
--PLEASE, oh PLEASE-- I BEG YOU-- I DON'T WANNA FRY!
HEY, PAL--
--FORGET ABOUT MAGMA.
WORRY ABOUT ME.
IF IT HURTS THIS MUCH...
...I GUESS I'M NOT DEAD.
CYPHER!
MY NEW COSTUME, IT'S RUINED!
IT SAVED YUIR LIFE, YOU GREAT SILLY--
--AS YOU SAVED MIRAGE'S!
YAY, ME--
--OW! RAHNE!! DON'T HUG SO HARD!!!
SORRY.
WE GOT VIPER'S GOONS.
WHAT ABOUT HER?
WAS SHE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HERE?
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.
NO PROBLEM-- WE'LL SIMPLY "PERSUADE" ONE OF OUR PRISONERS TO LEAD US TO HER.

THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, MIRAGE.
THUNDERBIRD'S VOICE!
IF YOU WISH TO FIND VIPER AND THE SAMURAI...
...YOU'VE ONLY TO LOOK UP!
SURPRISE!
I DO SO LOVE DISHIN' OUT...
...A HEARTY MEAL OF CROW!
VERY CLASSY THREADS YOU'RE WEARING, MUTANTS.
YOU GUYS ROB A CIRCUS, OR WHAT?
OH, BY THE BYE...
...SINCE WE CAUGHT THE VILLAINS...
...THAT MEANS WE WIN!
ANY ARGUMENT?
MIND TELLING US HOW?
WE SCOPED OUT WHO WAS BEHIND THIS CAPER PROBABLY AS QUICKLY AS YOU DID. I KNEW YOU'D TANGLED WITH VIPER BEFORE AND FIGURED YOU'D BE WORRIED ABOUT US TACKLING SOMEONE THAT FORMIDABLE.
YOU THINK WE'RE BABIES, DANI? OUR TRAINING'S AS TOUGH AS YOURS, OUR POWERS AS GOOD. WE'RE JUST AS SNEAKY.
I ALSO FIGURED YOU'D SPY ON US WITH YOUR HOUSE SORCERESS.
SO I MADE SURE EVERYTHING YOU OVERHEARD WOULD POINT YOU IN THE DIRECTION WE WANTED YOU TO GO.
I KNEW THIS WAS TOO EASY! YOU USED US AS YOUR STALKING HORSE--TO CLOBBER VIPER'S MOB WHILE YOU WENT AFTER HER.
IF NOT FOR US, SHE'D HAVE SUMMONED THEM...
...THE MOMENT YOU SHOWED YOUR FACES!

BULLPEN BULLETINS

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Blast! That holographic image projector cost a fortune! Hope it's still deductable under the new tax laws!"

—Iron Man, IRON MAN #221

ITEM: After a few days shy of a decade (!) mellow *Mary Jo Duffy* has decided to turn in her editorial blue pencil and join the ranks of **Marvel**'s frantic freelancers. Mary Jo, who's been the managing editor on our **Epic** line for the past three years, began her editorial stint up here at Marvel 'way back in January 1977. Before there even was an *Epic* line to hitch up with, she served as an assistant editor to then-staff editors *Bob Hall* and *Al Milgrom*. Soon after the late lamented *Epic Magazine* began, she became *Archie Goodwin's* associate editor, becoming an editor when the Epic comics line was launched in 1982. Now that she's left the 9 to 5 grind, you can see her scripting talents on display in the ongoing FALLEN ANGELS Limited Series, as well as the forthcoming PUNISHER graphic novel. (Gee, with Mary Jo gone, the only people who've been on staff longer than she are the redoubtable *Ralph Macchio* and jaunty *Jim Shooter*!)

ITEM: Congratulations to both wily *Walt Simonson* and busy *Bill Sienkiewicz* for winning a pair of prestigious foreign awards for their comics work. "Uncle" Walt went to Oviedo, Spain to pick up the Haxtur Award given by El III Salón del Comic Ciudad de Oviedo for his writing on THOR. Bill traveled to Lucca, Italy to receive the Yellow Kid Award and the Grand Guinigi for his artistry on the ELEKTRA: ASSASSIN Epic book. Take your bows, guys—both of you are helping to advance the prestige of comic books the world over!

ITEM: Congratulations are also due vivacious *Virginia* and jazzy *Johnny Romita* on the birth of their very first grandchild. Born on December 31, 1986, captivating *Krista Romita* ushered in the New Year (not to mention a new generation of Romitas) at four pounds and seven ounces. Rumor has it that *Victor* and *Nancy Romita*, *Krista's* proud parents, have already started making plans to send her to art school. She can't start penciling too soon if she's going to follow in the grand artistic steps of granddaddy *John Senior* and uncle *John Junior*! (*Virginia* claims *Krista* was born ahead of schedule, but what would you expect our tantalizing Traffic Manager to say? After all, it's her job to keep our ever-illustrious, but never industrious, editorial staff on schedule so that our consummate comics come out on time every month like they should!)

ITEM: As most of you already know, Spider-Man is getting married this summer! Yes, that's right, the ol' web-swinger is finally going to tie the knot. To help celebrate this momentous occasion, we're going to throw a very special bachelor party for everyone's favorite wall-crawler at *The Wonderful World of Comics* Convention which will be held on May 2nd and 3rd, at the Oakland Hyatt Hotel in Oakland, California. The featured guests will include *Smiling Stan Lee*, *Jaunty Jim Shooter*, *Sensational Steve Englehart*, and a host of other **Marvel** madmen. For more information on this convention, you can write to:

Bob Borden
c/o Fact, Fiction & Fantasy
2247 First Street
Livermore, CA 94450

Or, you can call Bob at 415-449-5233. Just tell him that **Marvel** sent you!

Pro File on: JIM SHOOTER

Editor in Chief of: *The entire Marvel, Epic, and Star lines of comic books*

Marvel freelance credits (past): *STAR BRAND, SECRET WARS I and II, THE AVENGERS, DAREDEVIL, GHOST RIDER, DAZZLER, and almost every other Marvel character at one time or another.*

Marvel freelance credits (present): *By popular demand, I'm not writing anything at the moment.*

My place of birth is: *Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

My hobbies are: *I like to run, lift weights and ride motorcycles. According to Playgirl Magazine, I'm one of the Fifty Most Eligible Bachelors In America, and I'm continually trying to prove it!*

My pet peeves are: *Narrowmindedness and shortsightedness.*

The single work which I am most proud of is: *The improved financial benefits and creators rights which I've managed to get for the people who work at Marvel.*

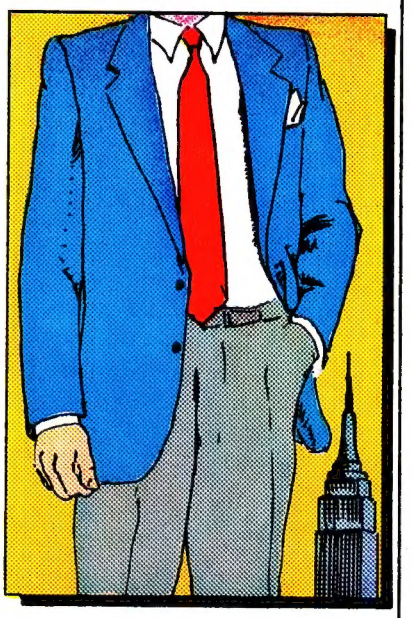
My oddest habit is: *I can't do any creative work at a desk or a table. I do most of my writing on a lap board with my feet propped up while I'm seated on the left end of a couch.*

The biggest influences on my work include: *Stan Lee, Mort Weisinger and Mark Twain.*

My greatest unfulfilled ambition in the comics field is: *To write a story that I am happy with.*

The worst part of my job is: *That I can't do it as well as I want.*

When nobody's looking I like to: *Practice juggling.*



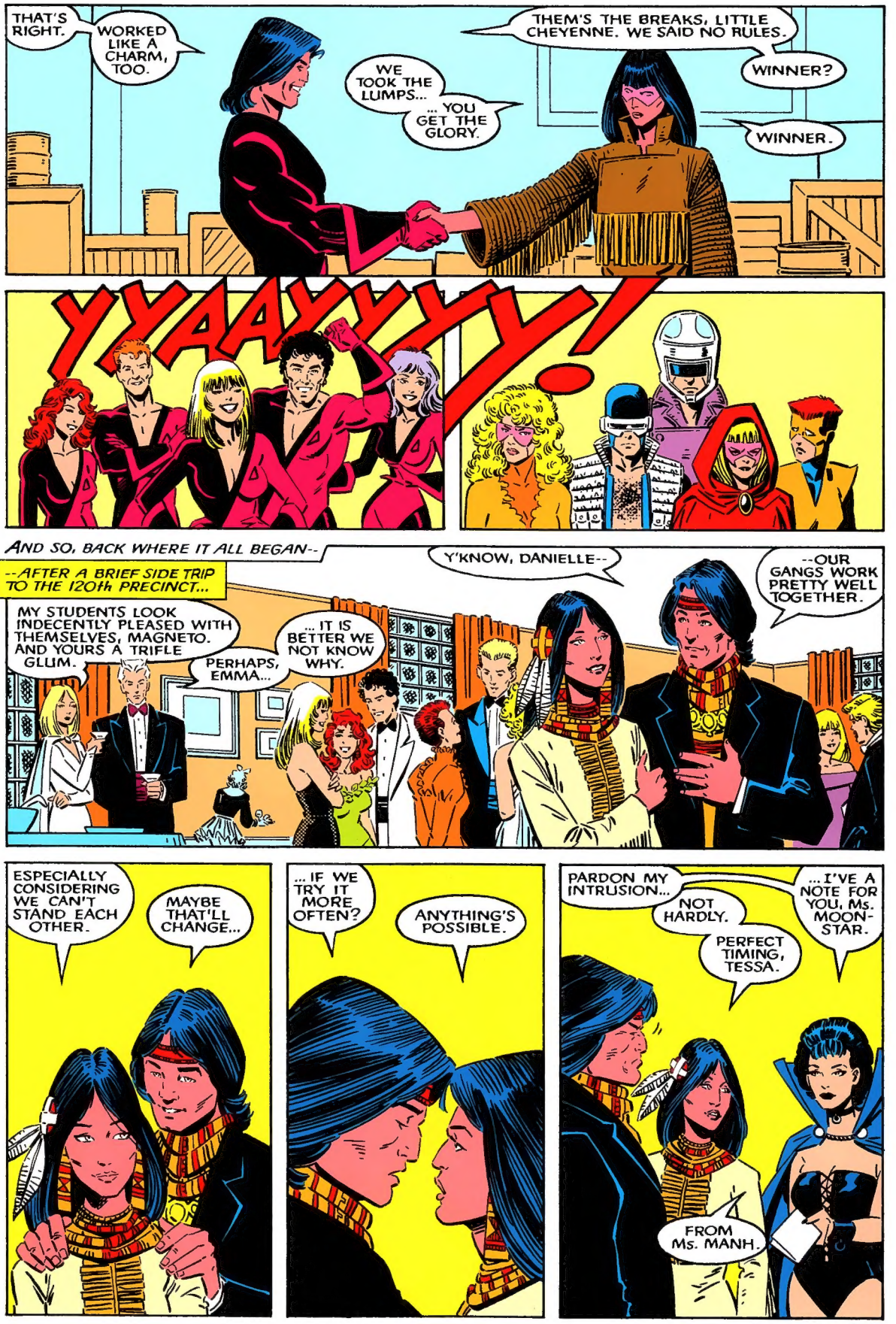
The one thing I really want the world to know about me is: *I don't really care what the world knows about me, or what the world thinks of me, as long as I do what's right.*

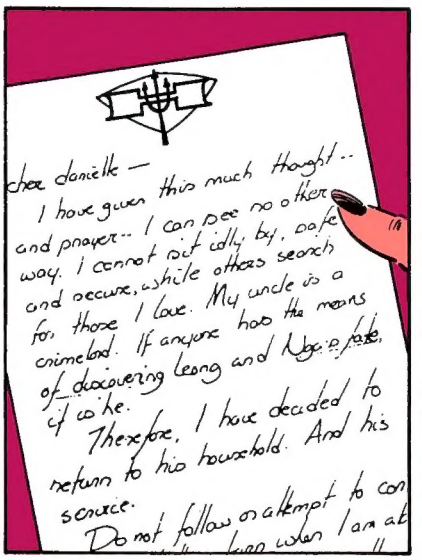
CHECKLIST

- ☐ **DAREDEVIL #245**—Guest-starring the Black Panther!
- ☐ **NEW MUTANTS #54**
- ☐ **STRIKEFORCE: MORITURI #9**
- ☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #29**—With Wolverine!
- ☐ **WEST COAST AVENGERS #23**
- ☐ **G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS #6**
- ☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT #49**—Versus their most deadly adversary, Omega!
- ☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #332**—Steve Rogers resigns as Cap!
- ☐ **FALLEN ANGELS (Limited Series) #5**
- ☐ **STRANGE TALES II #5**—With two great features! Cloak & Dagger battle Rodent, and Dr. Strange meets the New Defenders!
- ☐ **POWER PACK #31**—Alex sets out to destroy a Crack house!
- ☐ **AVENGERS #282**
- ☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #334**
- ☐ **MARVEL TALES #202**
- ☐ **SILVER SURFER #2**—Return to Zenn La, the Surfer's home planet!
- ☐ **X-MEN #220**
- ☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #197**—With Red Sonja!
- ☐ **G.I. JOE #62**
- ☐ **MARVEL SAGA #21**
- ☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #305**—Ms. Marvel joins the FF!
- ☐ **IRON MAN #221**
- ☐ **THE 'NAM #9**
- ☐ **PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #129**
- ☐ **PUNISHER #2**—Out to destroy the South American Crack connection!
- ☐ **X-FACTOR #19**—This guy's name says it all: Apocalypse!
- ☐ **CLASSIC X-MEN #12**
- ☐ **TRANSFORMERS #31**
- ☐ **THOR #382**—A special *double-sized* issue, in which everything happens! And we do mean everything!!
- ☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE #17**—Beginning . . . the Handbook of the Dead.
- ☐ **AVENGERS INDEX #2**—Featuring all the villains, the guest stars, the excitement and the creators of issues #24–47!
- ☐ **G.I. JOE DIGEST #5**

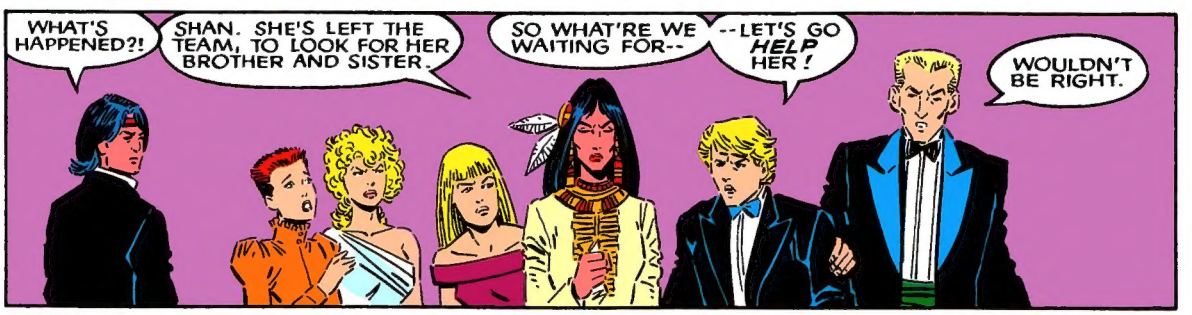
MARVEL MAGAZINES

- ☐ **MARVEL AGE #53**
- ☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #138**
- ☐ **CONAN SAGA #3**
- ☐ **HOUSE II**—A Marvel adaptation of the hit horror movie! Scripted by RALPH MACCHIO. Art by ALAN KUPPERBERG and Co.!

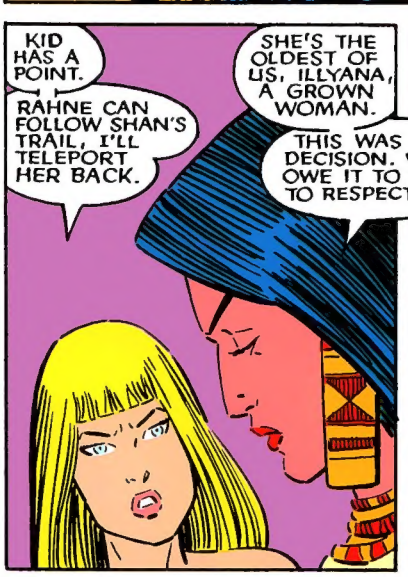

THAT'S RIGHT.
WORKED LIKE A CHARM, TOO.
WE TOOK THE LUMPS...
... YOU GET THE GLORY.
THEM'S THE BREAKS, LITTLE CHEYENNE. WE SAID NO RULES.
WINNER?
WINNER.
YYAAYYYY!
AND SO, BACK WHERE IT ALL BEGAN--
--AFTER A BRIEF SIDE TRIP TO THE 120th PRECINCT...
MY STUDENTS LOOK INDECENTLY PLEASED WITH THEMSELVES, MAGNETO. AND YOURS A TRIFLE GLUM.
PERHAPS, EMMA...
... IT IS BETTER WE NOT KNOW WHY.
Y'KNOW, DANIELLE--
--OUR GANGS WORK PRETTY WELL TOGETHER.
ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING WE CAN'T STAND EACH OTHER.
MAYBE THAT'LL CHANGE...
... IF WE TRY IT MORE OFTEN?
ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE.
PARDON MY INTRUSION...
NOT HARDLY.
PERFECT TIMING, TESSA.
... I'VE A NOTE FOR YOU, Ms. MOON-STAR.
FROM Ms. MANH.


chere danielle —
I have given this much thought--
and prayer-- I can see no other
way. I cannot sit idly by, safe
and secure, while others search
for those I love. My uncle is a
criminal. If anyone has the means
of discovering Leong and Nga-o-fate,
it is he.
Therefore, I have decided to
return to his household. And his
service.
Do not follow or attempt to con
Even when I am ab

"DO NOT FOLLOW OR ATTEMPT TO CONTACT ME. I SHALL RETURN WHEN I AM ABLE. UNTIL THAT DAY, I WISH YOU WELL.
"I LOVE YOU ALL-- XI'AN COY MANH"
BLAST!


WHAT'S HAPPENED?!
SHAN. SHE'S LEFT THE TEAM, TO LOOK FOR HER BROTHER AND SISTER.
SO WHAT'RE WE WAITING FOR--
--LET'S GO HELP HER!
WOULDN'T BE RIGHT.

THE HECK YOU SAY!
THAT'S THE SAME STUPID LINE YOU FED ME, GUTHRIE, WHEN BOBBY AND WARLOCK RAN AWAY.
IF SHE WANTED OUR HELP, BOY, SHE'D HAVE ASKED.
DON'T CALL ME "BOY!" AND I THOUGHT WE LOOKED AFTER OUR OWN! WASN'T THAT WHAT TONIGHT WAS ALL ABOUT?!


KID HAS A POINT.
RAHNE CAN FOLLOW SHAN'S TRAIL, I'LL TELEPORT HER BACK.
SHE'S THE OLDEST OF US, ILLYANA, A GROWN WOMAN.
THIS WAS HER DECISION. WE OWE IT TO HER TO RESPECT IT.

NEXT: A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME-- AND, CREATIVELY SPEAKING, SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!

MINUTEMEN
Quick
STOP
RST